Collection Summary
Title: Roger W. Wilkins Papers
Span Dates: 1861-2012
Bulk Dates: (bulk 1962-2007)
ID No.: MSS85777
Extent: 18,000 items
Extent: 25 containers plus 1 classified
Extent: 10 linear feet
Extent: 69 digital files (4.5 GB)
Language: Collection material in English
Location: Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
LC Catalog record: https://lccn.loc.gov/mm2013085777
Summary: Civil rights activist, professor of history, journalist, and United States assistant attorney general in President Lyndon B. Johnson's administration. Correspondence, memoranda, speeches, writings, notebooks, teaching material, family papers, newspaper clippings, printed matter, photographs, digital files, and other papers relating to Wilkins's career and civil rights and social activism.

Selected Search Terms
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People
Bell, David E., 1919-2000--Correspondence.
Bradlee, Benjamin C.--Correspondence.
Clark, Ramsey, 1927- --Correspondence.
Claytor, Helen Jackson, 1907-2005. Helen Jackson Claytor papers.
Collins, LeRoy--Correspondence.
Edelman, Marian Wright--Correspondence.
Jackson, Jesse, 1941-
Kennedy, Edward M. (Edward Moore), 1932-2009--Correspondence.
King, Martin Luther, Jr., 1929-1968.
Mandel, Nelson, 1918-2013--Travel--United States.
Marshall, Thurgood, 1908-1993--Correspondence.
Powell, Colin L.--Correspondence.
Sulzberger, Arthur Hays, 1891-1968--Correspondence.
Wilkins, Earl W., 1905-1941. Earl W. Wilkins papers.

Organizations
George Mason University--Faculty.
Institute for Policy Studies.
United States. Agency for International Development.
United States. Community Relations Service.
United States. Department of Justice.

Subjects
Affirmative action programs--United States.
African American journalists.
African American youth.
African Americans--Civil rights.
African Americans--Politics and government.
African Americans--Segregation.
American newspapers--New York (State)--New York.
American newspapers--Washington (D.C.)
Civil rights--United States.
Civil rights.
Crime--United States.
Education--United States.
Journalism--United States.
Justice, Administration of--United States.
Political corruption--United States.
Poverty--United States.
Race relations--United States.
Race riots--United States.
Segregation--United States.
Social action--United States.
Social problems--United States.
Suffrage--United States.

Places
United States--Economic conditions--1945-
United States--Politics and government--1989-
United States--Race relations.
United States--Social conditions--1945-

Titles
New York times.
Washington post.

Occupations
Civil rights leaders.
Educators.
Journalists.
Lawyers.
Public officials.

Provenance
The papers of Roger W. Wilkins, civil rights activist, professor of history, journalist, lawyer, and United States assistant attorney general, were given to the Library of Congress in 2013. An addition was received in 2018.

Transfers
Audiovisual material has been transferred to the Motion Picture, Broadcasting, and Recorded Sound Division where they are identified as part of these papers.
Other Repositories

Other papers of Roger W. Wilkins can be found in the Special Collections and Archives of the George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

Copyright Status

Copyright in these papers is reserved. Consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for further information.

Access and Restrictions

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins are open to research. Researchers are advised to contact the Manuscript Reading Room prior to visiting. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use.

Security Classified Documents

Government regulations control the use of security classified material in this collection. Manuscript Division staff can furnish information concerning access to and use of classified materials.

Digital Format

Digital files were received as part of the papers of Roger W. Wilkins. Reference copies were created from the original digital media. Advanced notice is required for access to digital content; consult reference staff in the Manuscript Division for more information.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container or digital ID number, Roger W. Wilkins Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1932, Mar. 25</td>
<td>Born, Kansas City, Mo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>B.A., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>J.D., University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Married Eve Tyler (divorced 1976)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Associate, Delson, Levin, and Gordon, New York, N.Y.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962-1964</td>
<td>Special assistant to the administrator, United States Agency for International Development, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964-1965</td>
<td>Assistant director, director, Community Relations Service, Department of Commerce, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966-1969</td>
<td>Assistant attorney general, Community Relations Service, Department of Justice, Washington, D.C.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Shared in Pulitzer Prize for public service awarded to <em>Washington Post</em> for its investigation of the Watergate Affair</td>
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1980-1981

1981
Married Patricia Ann King

1982

1982-1992
Senior fellow, Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.

1986-2007
Clarence J. Robinson professor, George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.

1988
Published with Fred R. Harris *Quiet Riots: Race and Poverty in the United States*. New York: Pantheon Books

2001

2017, Mar. 26
Died, Kensington, Md.

Scope and Content Note

The papers of Roger W. Wilkins (1932-2017) span the years 1861-2012, with the bulk of the material dating from 1962 to 2007. The papers pertain to Wilkins's career in education, government service, journalism, and law; civil rights and social activism; and childhood and family. Included are correspondence, memoranda, speeches, writings, notebooks, teaching material, family papers, newspaper clippings, printed matter, photographs, digital files, and other papers. The papers are in English and are organized into the following series: Family Papers, Professional File, Speeches and Writings File, Miscellany, Digital Files, and Classified.

The Professional File consists of the bulk of the papers and contains material relating to the full range of Wilkins's career from 1958 to 2007 as an assistant attorney general of the United States, journalist, lawyer, professor, publisher, radio commentator, senior fellow at the Institute for Policy Studies, and special assistant to the administrator of the United States Agency for International Development. Prominent in the series are papers relating to the Community Relations Service, established under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The series documents Wilkins's efforts at the Community Relations Service, as director and assistant attorney general, to help communities resolve racial conflicts and tensions through conciliation and mediation. Additionally, as one of the first African-American editorial board members of the *Washington Post* and *New York Times*, Wilkins's work in journalism is reflected in the papers. Correspondence and memoranda in this series chronicle Wilkins's professional activities and include personal letters. Topics include affirmative action, African-American youth, civil rights, education, poverty, racial tension in the United States, race riots, and social activism. Correspondents include David E. Bell, Benjamin C. Bradlee, Ramsey Clark, Helen Jackson Claytor, LeRoy Collins, Marian Wright Edelman, Edward M. Kennedy, Thurgood Marshall, Colin L. Powell, Roy Wilkins, and Arthur Hays Sulzberger.

Other series provide additional documentation on Wilkins's personal and professional activities. The Family Papers relate to Wilkins's childhood, family history, and the life and accomplishments of Helen Jackson Claytor (mother), Marvel Jackson Cooke (aunt), Earl Wilkins (father), Roy Wilkins (uncle), and other family members. The Writings and Speeches File contains handwritten, printed, and typed drafts of published and unpublished writings and speeches. Also included are correspondence and supporting material. Topics on which Wilkins wrote include apartheid in South Africa, *Brown v. Board of Education*, civil rights, crime, Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns, Martin Luther King, Jr., race relations in the United States, segregation, voting rights, and the Watergate Affair. Wilkins's involvement in Jesse Jackson's presidential campaigns of 1984 and 1988 and role as national coordinator of Nelson Mandela's 1990 trip to the United States are featured in the Miscellany series. Also included in the series is material relating to the documentary *Throwaway People*, which was commentated by Wilkins.

The Digital Files consist of sixty-nine audio and video files orginally received on two DVDs. In 1993, Wilkins was a commentator on the segment "Out of the Ashes" for *CBS News Sunday Morning*, and he discussed the Kerner Commission's twenty-fifth anniversary. In 2004, Wilkins was interviewed about *Brown v. Board of Education* by Nadjia Varney for George Mason University Television's show *School Talk*. The digital files pertain to both television events.

Arrangement of the Papers

This collection is arranged in six series:
• Family Papers, 1861-2007
• Professional File, 1958-2010
• Speeches and Writings File, 1964-2012
• Miscellany, 1953-2012
• Digital Files, 2005-2007
• Classified, 1963-1968
## Description of Series

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Series</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| BOX 1-3   | **Family Papers, 1861-2007**  
Correspondence, genealogical material, legal papers, newspaper clippings, photographs,  
printed matter, tributes, writings, and other miscellaneous material.  
Arranged alphabetically by name of individual, topic, or type of material. | 
| BOX 4-16  | **Professional File, 1958-2010**  
Awards, correspondence, legal documents, memoranda, minutes, newspaper clippings,  
notebooks, reports, research material, scrapbooks, teaching and lecture material, transcripts,  
printed matter, and other papers.  
Arranged alphabetically by organization or place of employment. | 
| BOX 16-22 | **Speeches and Writings File, 1964-2012**  
Handwritten, printed, and typed drafts and copies of articles, book reviews, books, editorials,  
and speeches with supporting material.  
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein alphabetically or chronologically. | 
| BOX 22-25 | **Miscellany, 1953-2012**  
Awards, correspondence, newspaper clippings, notebooks, photographs, printed matter, topical  
files, and transcripts.  
Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material. | 
| DF       | **Digital Files, 2005-2007**  
Audio and text files relating to two of Wilkins's television appearances. The series comprises  
sixty-nine files and 4.5 GB of data. The files were originally received on two DVDs, and  
each media was assigned a unique digital ID number. Request files using the digital ID  
number.  
Arranged alphabetically by title. | 
| BOX CL   | **Classified, 1963-1968**  
Agendas, correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, transcript, and other papers.  
Arranged according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed. |
# Container List

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **BOX 1-3** | **Family Papers, 1861-2007**  
Correspondence, genealogical material, legal papers, newspaper clippings, photographs, printed matter, tributes, writings, and other miscellaneous material.  
Arranged alphabetically by name of individual, topic, or type of material. |
| **BOX 1** | Childhood, 1937-1941, undated |
| **BOX 1** | Cooke, Cecil Gladstone (uncle), 1925-1929, 1972, 1978 |
| **BOX 1** | Cooke, Marvel Jackson (aunt) |
| **BOX 1** | Awards, 1998 |
| **BOX 1** | Correspondence, 1962, 1969, 1977-2001, undated  
(2 folders) |
| **BOX 1** | Death, 2000-2001 |
(2 folders) |
| **BOX 1** | Robeson, Paul, 1974-1976, 1982, 1990, undated |
| **BOX 1** | Will, 1960, 1989 |
| **BOX 1** | Claytor, Helen Jackson (mother) |
(2 folders) |
| **BOX 2** | Minnesota, 1990-2005, undated |
| **BOX 2** | Claytor, Robert W. (stepfather), 1976, 1989 |
| **BOX 2** | King, Patricia Ann (wife), 1992 |
| **BOX 2** | Wilkins, Roy (uncle) |
(2 folders) |
| **BOX 3** | Obituary, 1981 |
| **BOX 3** | Photographs, 1953, 2003, undated |
| **BOX 3** | Roy Wilkins Chair and Center in Human Relations and Social Justice, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1989-1995, undated |
| **BOX 3** | Tributes, 1977, 1981 |
Family Papers, 1861-2007

**Container** | **Contents**
--- | ---
(2 folders)

**BOX 4-16**  
**Professional File, 1958-2010**  
Awards, correspondence, legal documents, memoranda, minutes, newspaper clippings, notebooks, reports, research material, scrapbooks, teaching and lecture material, transcripts, printed matter, and other papers.  
Arranged alphabetically by organization or place of employment.

BOX 4 | Community Relations Service, Justice Department  
BOX 4 | Activities, eastern and southern region, undated  
(2 folders)
BOX 4 | Annual report, 1968
BOX 4 | Appointment book, 1965
BOX 4 | Black elected officials, 1968
BOX 4 | Civil rights, 1966-1970, 2005  
*See also Classified*  
(3 folders)

BOX 5 | Correspondence  
BOX 5 | 1964  
(2 folders)
BOX 5 | 1965  
(7 folders)
BOX 6 | 1966-1967  
(8 folders)
BOX 6 | 1968  
(1 folder)

BOX 7 | General, 1965-1969, 1991  
(2 folders)
BOX 7 | Interagency Youth Committee, 1964-1966, undated  
*See also Classified*  
(4 folders)
BOX 7 | Memoranda to the president and vice president, 1962-1968
BOX 7 | "Military and Domestic Tranquility" by Jack Rosenthal, 1968
BOX 7 | National conference, 1968
BOX 8 | Notebooks, 1967-1968
BOX 8 | Police investigation, Los Angeles, Calif., 1965
BOX 8 | *Report of the Civil Rights Task Force*, 1966  
(2 folders)
BOX 8 | Scrapbooks, 1966-1969
BOX 8 | Summer review, 1968  
*See also Classified*  
(2 folders)
BOX 8 | Third International Conference on Black Power, Philadelphia, Pa., 1968
BOX 8 | Transcript of Wilkins’s interview, 1967
BOX 9 | Delson, Levin, and Gordon
BOX 9 | Cases, 1958-1962  
(4 folders)
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<tr>
<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 9</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1958-1962</td>
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<td>BOX 9</td>
<td>General, circa 1959</td>
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<td>BOX 10</td>
<td>George Mason University, Fairfax, Va.</td>
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<td>BOX 10</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
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<td>BOX 10</td>
<td>From students, 1989-2011</td>
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<td>BOX 10</td>
<td>General</td>
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<td>1986-1990</td>
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<td>BOX 11</td>
<td>1991-2006</td>
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<td>(9 folders)</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>2007-2008, undated</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>Course descriptions, 2002-2007</td>
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<td>Courses</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>Conceptions of Self, 2004</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>Contemporary Society in Multiple Perspectives, 1999</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>General, 1991-2008</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>Invitation to teach, 1986-1987</td>
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<td>BOX 12</td>
<td>Lecture notes, 1991-2006</td>
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<td>BOX 13</td>
<td>NAACP, <em>Crisis</em> magazine</td>
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<td>BOX 13</td>
<td>Board of directors, 1996-2001, 2009</td>
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<td>BOX 13</td>
<td>Correspondence, 1996-2009</td>
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<td>BOX 13</td>
<td>General, 2003-2010, undated</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td><em>New York Times</em></td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>Correspondence</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>General, 1978-1979</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>Deposition, 1979</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>General, 1974-1979, 1986-1987</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td><em>Report of the Committee on Safeguarding the Integrity of our Journalism</em>, 2003</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td><em>Spectrum</em>, Columbia Broadcasting Systems radio program</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>General 1978-1983</td>
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<td>BOX 14</td>
<td>Transcripts, 1980-1983</td>
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Professional File, 1958-2010

Container: United States Agency for International Development
- Correspondence and memoranda
  - 1962
  - 1963 See also Classified
    - (1 folder)
  - 1964 See also Classified
    - (4 folders)
  - Personnel projects, 1961-1964
    - (2 folders)
- Washington Post
  - (6 folders)

Speeches and Writings File, 1964-2012
Handwritten, printed, and typed drafts and copies of articles, book reviews, books, editorials, and speeches with supporting material.
Arranged alphabetically by type of material and therein alphabetically or chronologically.

- Articles and editorials
  - By others about Wilkins
    - 1965-1970
      - (2 folders)
  - 1980-2012
    - (5 folders)
- By Wilkins
  - Alphabetical file
    - "Confessions of a Blue-Chip Black," 1982
    - "Civil Rights: Pushing Them Back into Place," 1983
    - (3 folders)
  - "Gift of Hope," 2008-2009
  - Chronological file
    - 1972-1974
      - (3 folders)
  - 1975-2006, undated
    - (9 folders)
- Books
  - Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism
  - Correspondence, 1995-2003
  - Reviews, 2001-2003
    - (2 folders)
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<th>Container</th>
<th>Contents</th>
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<tr>
<td>BOX 21</td>
<td>Miscellany, 1953-2012&lt;br&gt;Awards, correspondence, newspaper clippings, notebooks, photographs, printed matter, topical files, and transcripts.&lt;br&gt;Arranged alphabetically by topic or type of material.</td>
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<td>BOX 22-25</td>
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<td>----------</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(2 folders)</td>
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<td>BOX 25</td>
<td>Poverty, 1985</td>
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<td>BOX 25</td>
<td>Thomas, Clarence, 1991</td>
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<td>(2 folders)</td>
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<td>BOX 25</td>
<td>Washington Drama Society, circa 1967</td>
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**DF**

**Digital Files, 2005-2007**

Audio and text files relating to two of Wilkins's television appearances. The series comprises sixty-nine files and 4.5 GB of data. The files were originally received on two DVDs, and each media was assigned a unique digital ID number. Request files using the digital ID number. Arranged alphabetically by title.

**ID:** Mss85777_137_01  

**ID:** Mss85777_137_02  
*School Talk,* "Brown v. Board of Education Today," George Mason University Television, 2005

**BOX CL**

**Classified, 1963-1968**

Agendas, correspondence, memoranda, minutes, reports, transcript, and other papers. Arranged according to the series, container, and folder from which the items were removed.

**BOX CL 1**  
**Professional File**

**BOX CL 1**  
Community Relations Service, Justice Department

**BOX CL 1**  
Civil rights, 1968 (Container 4)

**BOX CL 1**  
Interagency Youth Committee, 1964-1966 (Container 7)

**BOX CL 1**  
Summer review, 1968 (Container 8)

**BOX CL 1**  
United States Agency for International Development

**BOX CL 1**  
Correspondence and memoranda

**BOX CL 1**  
1963 (Container 15)

**BOX CL 1**  
1964 (Container 15)